1; Schram M-5 (1911-1922) 1954 AE9 Monguor AE9

576 606 291 and a felt hat which is a simpler edition of the ceremonial hat with its additional ornament of a miniature spear and shield.

MARRIAGE AND ITS REGULATION

581 858 Because of the veneration of ancestors and the necessity for having male children in order to carry on the ancestral cult, marriage is not an optional but a necessary part of Monguor life, except of course for lamas. The poorest people will scrimp and save in order to be able to meet the expenses of getting a bride for a son. They will sell animals and land, and go into debt. When a paternal inheritance is divided, money must first be set aside to provide wives for the brothers who are not yet married. People will be consoled or resigned at the death of a husband or wife, but never for the death of an only son, and the sweetest consolation of an old man nearing death is to have married all his sons and to have cradled his grandsons. When two old Monguors meet for the first time, the polite greeting includes the question, "are all your sons married and do you have grandsons?"

582 Exogamy is the first rule of marriage and is strictly observed among the nobles. There is absolute prohibition against marrying a girl belonging to the same clan. Within the clan, therefore, there are no marriages between nobles and commoners, because all bear the same clan name. It has already been noted above, however, that there began to be exceptions to this rule among the commoners in the period of decay and breakdown of the Monguor society, partly because the commoners are in fact not the actual descendants of the ancestors of the noble clan but merely "assimilated" as a result of being the subjects of the noble clan, with the result that poor nobles began to marry their daughters to sons of commoners. It has also been noted that this loosening of the rules among the commoners was aided by the enrollment of Tibetans and Chinese in the Monguor clans; Tibetan and Chinese women were frequently married by Monguor commoners, and occasionally by the nobles.

The rule of exogamy makes impossible marriage between the children of two brothers, but marriages between the children of a brother and a sister are allowable and even frequent, because the sister married out of her brother's clan and her children and his children therefore have different clan names. Very often, also, when family *A* gives a girl to family *B*, family *B* reciprocates by giving a girl to be married to a boy of family *A*. In all marriages, however, boys and girls must be of the same generation—a custom which may be the result of Chinese influence.

581 565 The influence of wealth on marriage is of several kinds. The fact that chiefs of clans and rich nobles and rich commoners are prone to marry girls from rich families, including Chinese families, has already been mentioned. The influence of wealth is also shown when

1: Schram M-5 (1911-1922) 1954 AE9 Monguor AE9

581 a well-to-do family needing more work done in the household arranges for a son who is still a child to 565 marry a grown-up girl. It is not surprising that such marriages are frequently followed by the elopement of the poor bride with a lover of her own choosing. The 583 case corresponding to that of the bride brought into the family for the sake of her working power is that of the 587 poor young man who goes to work in a family not his own, perhaps for years, in order to earn a bride from that family. To work for a bride in this manner is to lose a certain amount of status socially, since it requires that the young man live in a household where all the male members of the family have status and rights, and he alone is an outsider. A widow usually becomes the second wife of one of her husband's brothers if the family is still living united, but not if the brothers have already divided their inheritance and are living separately. More and more, in the decline of the old Monguor society, it has become usual for the widow to make her own choice of a second husband. If, instead of going to one of her husband's brothers, she marries a man of her own choice, it is customary for her new husband to bring her home secretly and at night, for fear that she may be kidnapped on the road by some other aspiring lover—a practice that seems to indicate that an unprotected widow is, or was in the past, "fair game."

583 Two exceptional kinds of marriage I have dealt with in my previous study, *Le mariage chez les T'ou-jen*. 588 These are the "marriage to the pole," when a girl remains in the family in which she was born, but takes lovers and bears children, who instead of having the clan name of their father or fathers inherit the clan name of their mother's brothers and are treated as if they belonged to the patrilineal clan; and the "marriage to the girdle" when a girl, unmarried and living in her own family, has relations with a guest, who leaves her his girdle to which she may be "married" if she becomes pregnant.[3] Both of these customs appear to have been borrowed by the Monguors from the Tibetans.

The price paid for the bride is the subject of considerable negotiations between the families concerned, conducted by a go-between. It is usual for a girl to be a couple of years older than her husband, and the usual age for marriage is when the boy is fourteen, fifteen, or sixteen. Divorce and repudiation by the husband are rather rare.[4]

THE POSITION OF WOMEN

562 The status of the wife is inferior to that of the hus-581 band, as is inevitable in a society in which social rights and family property are regarded as belonging primarily

[3] See above, p. 78, n. 5.

[4] Here only a few data are given about marriage customs, since I have already published an extensive monograph on this subject; see *Le mariage chez les T'ou-jen (Monguors) du Kan-sou.*

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to the male side of the family. When a girl marries, her family is regarded, not as "acquiring" relations-in-law, but as "losing" the girl; hence the fundamental attitude that the husband's family is "buying" the girl and her own family "selling" her. Since by this transfer her labor and productive power are lost to the family in which she was born, the family, in arranging the match, attempts to recover the capital value of the girl and this makes it impossible to consider her wishes in making the marriage. The interests of the family come first. The same considerations apply both to the inheritance of a widow by one of her husband's brothers, and the comparable custom, known to have been observed in the ancient Mongol society from which the Monguors are descended, under which a son inherited the wives of his father, except for his own mother. Both customs can clearly be referred to the view that these women, having been acquired at the expense of the family or clan, must be retained within the family. To the Chinese the idea that a son should inherit his father's secondary wives is abhorrent, and therefore the disappearance of this custom probably began when the Monguors submitted to the Ming dynasty, although the dying out of the custom must also have been encouraged by the decrease of polygamy for reasons that have been described above.

Wives accept their inferior status without resentment. Their individual outlook is conditioned by the social atmosphere in which they have been brought up. When they were children, they realized that women were more proud of bearing sons than daughters. They knew that women who had no sons felt inferior. When they were big enough to work, they lived, worked, and ate in the kitchen with the daughters-in-law, while the male members of their family ate in the main room. Even if an uncle or brother took his meal in the kitchen, he had to be served respectfully by the womenfolk. Girls grew up accustomed to the rule that they could eat only after the men had finished. Consequently, a Monguor girl does not expect to find anything different in the family into which she marries.

Inferior status does not mean that a wife can be considered a slave. On this subject I cannot agree with the many writers who have maintained that among the pastoral nomadic societies of Asia the status of a wife is essentially that of a slave, and that the slave status derives from an anciently universal practice of marriage by capture. We know from history—for example, from the *Secret History of the Mongols*—that wives were captured. We know also that in the marriage customs of the pastoral Mongols of today there are ceremonies or practices that suggest a tradition of marriage by capture. We know also that the capture of women was one of the causes of the chronic warfare among the Mongols of old; but all of this does not prove that capture was the sole and universal method of acquiring wives. The

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562 chronic warfare among the ancient Mongols and Turks required alliances as well as feuds.

581 Hence the institution, known to be very early, of "pairs" of clans, each regularly taking its wives from the other in a sort of marriage alliance.[5] An association of this kind was a natural basis for alliance in war, since each clan would not only be aiding an ally but contributing to the security of its own daughters.[6]

512 Among pastoral nomads the traditional life of the man, especially the married man, is one of long periods 181 of idleness, spent largely in gossip and visiting, alternating with short periods of intense activity—in former times. defensive and offensive warfare, and in modern times the periods of migration, especially spring and autumn migration, and the periods spent by a man when he is summoned for obligatory service under the clan or tribal chief. The Monguors, as descendants of nomads, have inherited this tradition. The Monguor men, however, because of the change to an agricultural economy, cannot be quite as lazy as pastoral nomads. Farming cannot be profitable unless the men do their share of the work; but in spite of the example of patient toil set them by their Chinese neighbors, the Monguor men are never as industrious as the Chinese.

512 In the home, the kitchen and all things concerning food, the preparation of meals and cleaning up after 462 meals are women's work. Women also collect the fuel, consisting chiefly of the droppings of cows, horses, and sheep, which after being collected have to be dried in the sun until they are combustible. In the early morning when the cocks are still crowing to announce the coming day the wives start working while their husbands go on sleeping. First the wife must go to the well with a wooden cask on her back to fetch water. Then she boils water in the iron cauldron, set in the hearth, to make tea. While she is making the tea she carries hot water to her husband for washing. While the husband is drinking his early morning tea the wife dresses and washes the children, prepares breakfast and carries a

[5] Vladimirtsov, *Le régime social des Mongols,* as cited, 58. "Les Mongols des XIe–XIIIe siècles devaient parfois aller chercher très loin leurs femmes, et s'accorder avec un clan éloigné. En effect, . . . les pâturages étaient distribuées de telle manière chez les anciens Mongols, que souvent on ne recontrait aux alentours aucun répresentant d'un clan étranger. . . . Ceci explique, les réminiscences anciennes aidant, la fréquence des rapts; les femmes etaient enlevées de force chaque fois que l'occasion favorable s'en présentait.

"On relève fréquemment l'usage pour un clan de choisir ses promises dans un autre clan, mais toujours le même. Les membres de ces clans s'accordent mutuellement le titre d' 'allié,' de parent par alliance, '*quda.*' Parfois l'échange des jeunes filles à marier donne lieu à des traités en règle entre clans." (Note that side by side with the word *quda* there is the word which in modern Mongol is *hadam* and in Monguor *gadim*—see the Monguor relationship terms as given above—which expresses "relationship with a woman married into my clan, or a man who has married a woman from my clan."—O. L.)

[6] It is possible that this kind of association also helps to account for the importance of the maternal uncle, as "the man who has interest in both clans."—O. L.

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Preliminary Notes

000 1) General necessity for marriage.

2) Necessity for male descendants.

It seems that two remarks are necessary for a good understanding of this study. It is evident that in order to judge a painting, one must not see it at night in the light of a candle, but during the day in the light desired by the artist; one must even be at the right spot to observe what the author wished to put in it; then only will one understand his work.

Now concerning marriage among the T'ou-jen, the ways of thinking of the East and the West differing completely, it is easy not to see the facts in their true light.

The ways and customs of a people find their explanation in its present-day or former ways of thinking and philosophy. Whether this philosophy be good or bad, we do not judge here, but we must see the facts while seeing through ourselves in order to understand them. To observers with different ways of thinking, the same facts may seem rational and honest to some and puerile and full of horror to others.

1. General Necessity for Marriage

581 589 We Europeans do not find it strange to meet people who are not married; we are not surprised to see bachelors in our offices, at our meetings, at our parties; the idea does not occur to us that being unmarried incriminates them; although deep down we feel that this situation is abnormal, we find, outside of religious principles, enough reasons, if not to justify being single, at least to excuse it.

/6/ Now such a point of view does not exist among the T'ou-jen. No T'ou-jen will understand that a man who is not a monk, who is not a lama, is not married unless he is physically incapable of it.

581 589 183 Also among the T'ou-jen it is polite to find out whether all the sons are already married; to satisfy this law of marriage, one will go

581 /6 cont'd/
589 as far as selling all that one possesses, one's lands, houses, and ani-
183 mals, and will live in indigence; at the death of the parents, the elder married sons, in the case where the possessions are about to be divided up, must, before all else, put aside the sums required for the marriage of the younger unmarried sons; the parents, at the approach of death, will feel the greatest relief in the fact that they have gotten all their sons married. In order to permit the poor to marry, recourse is had to all kinds of contrivances, which very often are only imposed by reason of their primordial goal, which is that of marriage, and which scorn many obligations which in "justice" would seem, at the least, to have to be taken into greater consideration. One will find decisions which will appear unjust, but when one studies this mental attitude, which gives proportion to everything, one will understand that among the T'ou-jen the other principles yield to it and are sacrificed.

554 Marriage, for the T'ou-jen people, is the great affair in life,
581 obligatory above all else. One is no longer an honorable man when one is not married; this is because they believe that man has the duty to live according to natural law, that is, to marry and procreate children.

623 One day one of my catechists was invited to sit with the elders
627 of the village to judge the case of a penniless young man who had
689 run off with a girl of good rank. They had been brought back after
588 an escapade of three years, with a child born during the flight.

The young man was on his knees, his hands tied behind his back, imploring the clemency of the judges and of the whole assembled village. /7/ Despairing, he was saying, of ever being able to marry because of his extreme poverty, he had believed it permissible to act in this way, in order to be able to do his duty and marry. "I have been unjust toward the girl's parents, but I submit myself in advance to make all the reparations possible that will be required of me...." The girl also cries for mercy: "I could have hoped for a better match," she admits, "but I followed this young man to be gracious; without me, he would never have been able to marry...."

681 After an important palaver the offending couple was punished, and the judges found a way to indemnify the injured family and to legalize this union.

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627 The argument of the judges, before the whole village and the
581 families in question, is very instructive for us. The young man, they
181 said, has not respected the customs of our race, furthermore, he has been unjust with respect to the girl's family; these are grave errors; after the principal accusers, tirades are heard on the necessity of marriage and the indigence of the unfortunate man; finally, he is excused by going back to the extreme obligation to marry. As for the girl, disobedience is censured and the rights of the parents are loudly proclaimed, but she was brave in offering the young man the chance to marry, for marriage is a duty.

We should scarcely admit such reasons; and so I remarked to my catechist and explained to him that in my opinion this was only the commonplace story of a couple who loved each other. "That is possible," he replied, "but it is certain that the young man thought above all of the duty of marriage, and it is poverty which induced him to leave with the girl; as for the girl, she was courageous." It was the same argument. I encountered therefore the same way of thinking in my catechist.

This case would probably be resolved in the same way in the West as in the East, that is to say the union would be legalized; but the motives which would be invoked would be completely different.

/8/ This fact was for me a revelation at the time, and I was able to verify it many times later; it made me acquainted with the T'ou-jen way of thinking on the subject of the general necessity for marriage.

2. Necessity for Male Descendants

858 Another mental habit among the T'ou-jen is an excessive de-
562 sire to see children born, and especially male children.
181 In Europe one is not too concerned when a family has no chil-
581 dren or when there are only girls. Among the T'ou-jen the greatest of misfortunes is the absence of male children. It is necessary to be in the Orient to "live" the text of canon law: Matrimonii finis primarius est procreatio atque educatio prolis /"The primary purpose

/8 cont'd/

858 562 181 581 of marriage is the procreation and rearing of offspring"/. The son is the dream of the Orient. One will resign oneself to poverty, but one will never be consoled for not having a son; one will be consoled over the death of a husband or wife, but one will continue to weep for the loss of an only son. The fact of having no son will be interpreted as a punishment of heaven for sins committed in former lives. One will disregard expenses required for good works and pilgrimages in the interest of producing a male child. Extraordinarily noisy celebrations will be given upon the birth of a first-born son, in which the whole village will take part. The greatest happiness of a T'ou-jen woman will be that of having many sons; so that when one lives in T'ou-jen country, one thinks involuntarily of the Roman mother of the Gracchi presenting her children to her friends, saying, "Here are my jewels." One rarely sees alms refused to the numerous religious and lay beggars; it is because the terrible curse they are accustomed to offer, "Be without descendants," is feared. On the contrary, after receiving alms, the beggar will thank the giver by wishing him a numerous male posterity.

181 595 We must therefore expect to see matrimonial customs strongly influenced by this way of thinking. Thus, when the wife has no children or no sons, it seems natural /9/ to everyone to take a second wife and even a third. Every T'ou-jen, even the most upright, if means permit, will act in this way. He will not lose the esteem of his fellows in the least for doing so; all of them will even advise him to do so, the most religious man as well as the most pious woman. When the first wife has borne sons, and the husband takes a second, nothing shocking is seen in it, for the more sons one has, the better it is.

I always remember the discussions I had with T'ou-jen friends on the subject of polygamy. I admit that it seemed to me that my arguments did not convince them, even that they were not understood. The good fortune of having sons was for them too sublime an entity to be capable of being put on the same level with the family troubles which polygamy entails; if the bringing up of children of different mothers must leave something to be desired, this disadvantage is a negligible quantity in their eyes, even a quantity of lower order

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582 605 the mother in marriage and now we give you back her daughter to marry your son." The Chinese do not have this expression, as a scholar pointed out to me with a touch of scorn. When the daughter of brothers marries the son of her paternal aunt, which frequently occurs among the Chinese and the T'ou-jen, it is said of this alliance "that the niece goes to join her aunt."

584 184 At any rate one should not conclude from the above that today among the T'ou-jen all marriages are contracted, from generation to generation, regularly and necessarily, between members of the same families; one must not infer that the daughters-in-law in one family are always cousins; neither should one believe that people do not become united with "foreign" families in our use of the word. Present-day conditions are no longer those of former times; the truth is that [605 582] marriages between cousins (of brothers and sisters) are still very numerous. But since one family may be allied in this way to five or six others, and since one seeks avidly to remain always in the same circle of alliances, it is natural that unions between relatives will be more numerous than those between strictly "foreign" families.

582 This custom is of capital importance. Why does one seek and hold in such high honor these unions between families with which one already has former kin relations? This is an old and general custom. Why, above all, is the notion of tao ts'in, "returning the marriage," considered to be sacrosanct among the T'ou-jen? When a brother asks his sister for a daughter to marry his son, she cannot refuse under any pretext. Why? No one knows. Why does marriage generally remain circumscribed within a restricted circle of families? Why should a practice so generalized and deeply rooted in custom have to be recalled in the traditional short speech of the master of ceremonies of the bride's family on the wedding day at the bridegroom's house, even when the /17/ husband and wife belong to absolutely unrelated families? Even then it is supposed that they were related a long time ago, and that the present marriage renews the old relationships!

581 To understand this practice, should one not recall that all the T'ou-jen formerly lived in a nomadic state? These groups living in the immense steppes of Asia had necessarily to look for support from other nomadic groups, wandering like themselves and seeking support

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581 like themselves, for fear of being absorbed or exterminated by other clans stronger than they. Now what is more natural for making these supports as firm and durable as possible than family unions incessantly renewed by marriage?

Mo 614 581 As a matter of fact the youth of the two groups are then mutually exchanged in marriage, and the young people constitute reciprocal guarantees by founding new families on one side and the other. What is more natural than that the pact concluded between two groups be sealed by a series of marriages? When one reads the history of the Mongols, one learned that a certain clan always used to take its wives from a certain other one; that peace was sealed by marriages; that pacts were guaranteed by matrimonial alliances. This is the natural and necessary economy of the nomadic state. Formerly, the purpose of marriage was not only to found a family, but very often to bring together groups of families, or whole clans.

008 When within this sphere of ideas one understands the expression tao-ts'in with its character of supreme obligation, of sacredness, one easily finds an explanation for it; similarly, one easily understands the custom of marriage between young people of groups already related. Vestiges are found here of the nomadic state where such alliances were a necessity. But as an organ useless to the body slowly atrophies and its reason for being in the end is no longer understood, so the customs under consideration, having become useless to the present-day agrarian economy and practiced /18/ less and less, have ended up by no longer being understood by the people. (1)

Mo Ml 582

1. Vladimirtsov, The Life of Ghingis Khan, p. 10. "The tribal constitution of the Mongols implied exogamy, that is to say, it obliged the men of a given clan to take wives from some other clan that was not considered closely akin to their own....Owing to the constant feuds, wars and raids, the kidnapping of marriageable women was a frequent occurrence (witness the case of Yesugei-Begatur himself)... another solution was for the clans to conclude

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agreements for mutual exchange of women. The respective members of the two clans that had entered on such agreement called each other "Kuda"...." /Cited in English./

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The word Kuda is found as goda in the Monguor dialect as in all the other Mongol dialects; among the Monguor it has lost its primary sense. The custom according to which the members of two clans exchanged girls in marriage no longer exists. The word guda today is the name which the members of two families related by the marriage of one of their children give to each other.

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The conclusion then will be that we see the law of exogamy practiced largely mitigated by that of endogamy, which causes many wives, even in our day, to be taken from among the daughters of paternal aunts. (2)

2. I do not believe it is necessary to refer to totemism in order to explain the law of exogamy which presides over marriages among the T'ou-jen. The conditions of nomadic life amply provide an explanation for this practice; secondly, exogamy is not essentially totemic; thirdly, totemism among the Mongols in general has not been proved. When we deal with religious life among the T'ou-jen, we shall see, nevertheless, two facts which may attract attention to this question: we shall see the erection of the pole at the festivals given after planting, and we shall have two youth festivals.

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N *563 M 592 554 has the privilege of naming his own children and grandchildren. When a granddaughter is to be married, the grandfather usually consults her father before taking any action.

B. Marriage and Divorce Customs

N *563 M 581 562 [769] [771] Among the Mongours marriage is considered not as an optional part, but as an extremely necessary part of life. Because of the veneration of ancestors, as with their Chinese neighbors, the Mongours regard male children as a necessity for carrying on the ancestral cult. Ummarried sons, or childless sons are considered a calamity. The poorest families will even sell part of their livestock and land or go into debt to get a bride for their son.

N *563 M 584 583 582 Marriages usually are arranged by a go-between, frequently the maternal uncle of the boy. The brideprice is subject to considerable negotiations between the two families. The girl chosen usually is two years older than the boy. The acceptable marriage age for boys is between 14-16.

N *563 M 614 582 565 Clan exogamy is observed among the Mongours. There is absolute prohibition against marriage within the clan. The rule is sometimes overlooked by the commoners, but it is strictly observed among the nobles. Among the commoners, intermarriage with Tibetans and Chinese has contributed considerably to the weakening of this rule. In such instances, the clan itself is regarded as not being purely preserved, There is a feeling that it has been penetrated by foreign elements, and therefore the exogamy rules need not be observed as strictly.

N *563 M 582 Exogamy rules out marriage between children of brothers, but does not exclude marriage between the children of a brother and a sister, because the offspring of the latter belongs to a different clan.

M [587] A widowed wife, if living in the setting of the extended family, usually becomes the second wife of a brother of her late husband. However, if the brothers have already divided their inheritance and are living separately, she is free to remarry whomever she wants.

N *563 M 588 Two exceptional kinds of marriage, probably borrowed from the Tibetans, were noted by Schram. One is that of "marriage to the door post," whereby a girl remains in her family and clan, but takes lovers and bears children. Her children have her patrilineal clan name, remain within the family, and are treated as members of the patrilineal clan. The other is "marriage to the belt." A girl, unmarried and living with her own family, has relations with a guest, who leaves his belt, to which she may be "married" if she becomes pregnant.

N *563 M 604 The relationship between two families connected by marriage is maintained primarily by the maternal uncle. While not being part of his married sister's new family, he has a powerful influence